

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Division of Special Education is extending invitations for public school districts (including public charter schools) to apply for Special Education Improvement Grants. These grants are competitive and only a limited number of grants will be funded. Grant awards (ranging from \$15,000-\$75,000) will vary according to district size and funding may be available for up to a period of 3 years contingent upon fidelity of implementation and evidence of appropriate progress monitoring. Topic areas for improvement are Elementary Achievement and Post-Secondary Transition. The awarded monies must be primarily used for professional development. This is an excellent opportunity for districts to gain funds to provide access to trainings enabling implementation of various evidence-based practices, including 3-tiered models such as Response to Intervention (RtI) approaches, School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SW-PBS), and Professional Learning Communities (PLC). A list of approvable programs will be provided for these competitive grants. Applications will be required in the form of an Improvement Plan submitted through the web-based system-IMACS. Regional Improvement Planning trainings have been scheduled and are posted at: <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Compliance/training.html>. These trainings will be offered between October and December of 2007. It is strongly recommended that districts intending to apply for a grant attend a training session. Letters of intent to apply will be required by January 7, 2008. The deadline for application submission is March 3, 2008, 5:00p.m.

A grant packet including all pertinent information regarding application guidelines and processes is posted at <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/EffectivePractices/PDF/Grantinfo07.pdf>

Please contact the Effective Practices Section at 573-751-0187 with any questions regarding this grant program.

General Information

- Districts may submit grant proposals for both Elementary Achievement and Transition areas
- Funding requests may be for Communication Arts, Math, or Behavioral interventions
- Elementary Achievement grants are primarily for grades K through 5. Elementary Achievement funds can be used for K-8 only if the strategy selected progresses up from elementary school (for example, implementing RTI or PLC's in elementary and middle school). The emphasis must be at lower grade levels.
- Transition grant funding can only be used for Middle/ Jr. High through High School grades.
- The grants are competitive and only a limited number of grants will be funded. The amount of the grants will vary according to the size of the district.
- Grant application submissions to DESE are final. Districts will not have an opportunity to revise the grant prior to scoring.
- A list of allowable programs will be provided. If a district requests to use a program outside of the allowable list, a well-researched literature review showing proof of the evidence base must be provided before DESE will consider funding the request. Priority will be given to applications proposing implementation of three-tiered models of intervention with evidence-based instructional practices in academic and/or behavioral areas.
- The funding must be primarily used for professional development. There will be a cap on certain allowable expenses not directly related to professional development or strategy implementation.
- Districts who have previously received grants through DESE may apply for funds to expand a program included as approvable, or scale up previously approved programs.
- Grant funding may not be used to supplant initiatives currently paid for with District funds. For example-if a program is already implemented at the second grade level, grant monies cannot be used for materials for that program, though it could be used to scale up to other grades if the program is approved.
- Districts who previously attended the Improvement Planning training during the 2006-2007 school year are not required to attend the 2007-2008 training. However, there have been several changes to the scoring guide and the training has been expanded with better examples. Therefore, districts may wish to send personnel to the current training or at least contact their local Regional Professional Development Center personnel to learn about these updates.
- One year of funding will be granted to awarded districts, with the possibility of up to three years of funding contingent upon demonstrated implementation fidelity and effects.

2007-08 Special Education Improvement Grant Timeline

Item	Dates
<u>Training</u> Improvement Plan Development	October – December 2007
<u>Letters of Intent</u>	January 7, 2008
<u>Application Submission Deadline</u> Must be in the form of an Improvement Plan submitted through the web-based system IMACS	March 3, 2008, 5:00p.m.

Award Amounts by District Size

Maximum Grant Amount	Enrollment
Up to \$75,000	30,000+
Up to \$50,000	15,000-20,000
Up to \$25,000	5,000-14,999
Up to \$17,500	2,500-4,999
Up to \$15,000	0-2,499

Source: Robin Martin, Supervisor, Effective Practices

Intended Audience: Superintendents, Special Education Administrators

Date: September 5, 2007

In collaboration with Regional Professional Development Centers (RPDCs), the Division of Special Education will be conducting regional trainings on Improvement Planning this fall. These trainings are designed to assist public agencies in developing a plan to improve outcomes for students with disabilities and meet the targets of our State Performance Plan (SPP) <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/SPPpage.html>.

Use of the IP process and development of an appropriate Improvement Plan is required by the Division of Special Education for (1) districts who are in their pre-Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) year as part of a self-assessment and (2) districts who wish to apply for grants from the Division of Special Education. These districts are required to attend this training if they did not attend the IP training during the 2006-2007 school year. However, agencies who attended the training in 2006-2007 are highly encouraged to send a team to this training as the presentation has been enhanced to include more in-depth examples, more detailed improvement planning information, and an updated scoring guide.

Improvement Planning (IP) is a process that will allow you to evaluate the strengths and needs of your special education program to meet the learning and behavioral goals of students. IP emphasizes the use of a stakeholder group to evaluate information, data-based decision making, and implementation of evidence-based programs to improve student outcomes. It is useful as part of a continual process to assess the district's ability to meet the SPP targets.

Districts are encouraged to send teams of up to five (5) members to the training. We request that each district send their special education director as one of the participants. At least one of the attendees should be the person who will be responsible for completing the district's Special Education Improvement Plan.

***Registration is required. Please register through My Learning Plan by accessing the following link and clicking on Compliance Catalog: <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Compliance/training.html>. Continental breakfast and lunch will be served.

For further information, please contact Robin Martin, Supervisor, Effective Practices Section at 573-751-2512 or email robin.martin@dese.mo.gov.

Elementary Achievement

3-tier Models

- Response to Intervention (RtI)
- Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)*
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC)*
- Reading First

Evidence-based practices

- Reading Recovery
- Accelerated Reader/Reading Renaissance
- ClassWide Peer Tutoring
- Early Intervention in Reading
- Kaplan SpellRead
- Littlebooks
- Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)
- Start Making a Reader Today (SMART)
- Everyday Math

Progress Monitoring Tools

- AIMSWeb
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
- EdCheckup
- STAR
- Curriculum Based Measures (CBM)

Approvable

Expenditure Categories

*percentage caps apply

- Salaries
(ex. FTEs-not
approvable/ stipends-
approvable)
- Purchased
Services
(ex. Transportation/
travel; consultant fee;
course fee; speaker/
presenter; printing,
copying; trainer;
facilities; catering)
- Supplies and
Materials
(ex. Curricula;
evaluation supplies;
store-bought food;
professional books;
student incentives,
textbooks; student
planners; postage;
palm pilots)

Post-Secondary Transition

3-tier Models

- Response to Intervention (RtI)
- Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) *
- Professional Learning Communities(PLC) *
- High Schools That Work (HSTW)

Evidence-based practices

- Effective Transition Planning—
Teen Outcomes Program (TOP)
- Dropout Prevention—Check and Connect

Progress Monitoring Tools

- Curriculum Based Measurements (CBM)
- Program Specific Assessments

*To determine eligibility for participation in these RPDC sponsored trainings, please contact your regional RPDC consultant.

Proposed items not included on this list will require justification that describes the research base and the effectiveness for the particular purpose and target population.

PLEASE NOTE that the performance data displayed within IMACS may not be accurate. We are aware of this, and are working to correct it. This will not affect your ability to enter the improvement planning information.

Step 1: Logon to the DESE web applications at <https://k12apps.dese.mo.gov/webapps/logon.asp>. Enter your user ID and password. Click on "Special Education IMACS." If you do not have access, refer to the SELS message sent February 21, 2007:

<http://www.dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/ListServPostings/LS02.21.07.html>.

(POSTED BELOW)

Step 2: MUST BE DONE BY THE DISTRICT PERSON DESIGNATED AS THE ADMIN FOR IMACS: Towards the bottom of the district home page, click on Agency Maintenance, and set up access/rights for the other district IMACS Users. Until this is done, the other Users will not be able to do anything in the system. If no one has been designated at the Admin for IMACS, refer to the link in Step 1.

Step 3: You are now on the district home page, which provides you access to required activities for self-assessment districts and the grants available to grant districts. In the top right hand corner of the page, there is a dropdown menu that contains a link to a Help document. That document provides detailed information on navigation through the system and how to enter and save data. The remainder of this email is helpful information to get you started quickly on entering your improvement plan.

Step 4: To begin the improvement plan, do the following:

GRANT DISTRICTS: Click on the link to a grant in the Grants section of the home page. Then click on the link to the improvement plan. Enter district contact information and the needs assessment information. On the Objectives page, click the "Add Objective" link to begin work on an objective. The first thing you need to do is indicate that the objective is to be used for the grant application. Then proceed to complete the objective/activity/budget information.

Special Education Listserv

Subject: Special Education Monitoring/IMACS User Access

Source: Mary Corey, Director, Data Coordination

Intended Audience: Superintendents and Directors of Special Education

Date: February 21, 2007

The Division is nearing the end of development and testing of the Improvement Monitoring, Accountability, and Compliance System (IMACS), the system that will be used for special education monitoring self-assessment and grant application purposes.

District users with web application access to the Special Education District Profiles will be granted automatic USER access to IMACS. Before these users can do anything within the IMACS system, a district IMACS ADMIN person must designate what the USERS can do within the system. Therefore, each district needs to designate a limited number of ADMIN persons, preferably one.

In order to name the ADMIN person for your district, please email regina.miller@dese.mo.gov or call 573-526-0299 before February 27, 2007.

If people do not have access to the Special Education Profile, but need to access IMACS, they will need to fill out the access request form located at

<https://k12apps.dese.mo.gov/webapps/securityforms/MO500-2377.pdf>.

Please check the box next to "IMACS User" or "IMACS Admin," obtain necessary signatures, and fax to the number indicated on the form.

Districts will be notified when the IMACS system is available for use.

Letter of Intent – Elementary Achievement

Date

Name and Title

School District

Address

City, State Zip

It is the _____ school district's intention to apply for grant funding in the amount of \$_____ for improvement in the area of _____ during the 2008-2009 academic year. The district's improvement plan will be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Special Education through the web-based Improvement Monitoring, Accountability, and Compliance System (IMACS) no later than March 3, 2008.

Sincerely,

Letter of Intent – Post-Secondary Transition

Date

Name and Title

School District

Address

City, State Zip

It is the _____ school district's intention to apply for grant funding in the amount of \$_____ for improvement in the area of _____ during the 2008-2009 academic year. The district's improvement plan will be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Special Education through the web-based Improvement Monitoring, Accountability, and Compliance System (IMACS) no later than March 3, 2008.

Sincerely,